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Rag Content
June 1993

- The Old Town Bazaar
- **Drinking, Smoking, & Spitting**
- *News* reviews
- **Thanks for RiverFest**

and other strictly local stuff. . . .

# Depot Town Rag

Volume 16, Number 6 *"All the news in one block in one month."*

A Publication of the DEPOT TOWN ASSOCIATION, INC. The Old Caboose, 400 Market Place, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

## Frog Island headliners draw new stars, old friends

<u>Friday, June 18</u>
**NEW ORLEANS NIGHT**

**5 pm: Morris Lawrence& the Afro-musicology Ensemble:** A New Orleans native celebrates his hometown's traditional jazz.

**7 pm: John Mooney and Bluesiana:** A potent brew of Delta blues, electric slide guitar and New Orleans street beats.

**8:30 pm: John Delafose & the Eunice Playboys:** Midwestern debut of these traditional zydeco favorites.

**10:30 pm: Beausoleil:** One of the top cajun bands in the land.

<u>Saturday, June 19</u>
**GOURMET PICNIC, SOULFUL BLUES PARTY**

**Noon: The Pamela Wise Quintet:** The Motor City pianist with Jaribu Shahid, Lawrence Williams, Dwight Adams, Larry Smith.

**1:30 pm: The Lyman Woodard Trio:** A reunion of Detroit's renowned organist with Ron English and Leonard King.

**3pm: Straight Ahead:** Detroit's all-women quintet is gaining national fame for their blend of bop and contemporary soul.

**5 pm: The Steve Lacy Sextet:** A rare U.S. appearance by this legendary expatriate saxophonist and former Thelonious Monk sideman, and his cutting-edge band.

**7:00 pm: Mr. B:** Masterful blues and boogie pianist and singer.

**8:30 pm: The Chisel Brothers, featuring Thornetta Davis:** A tough blend of Motor City rock, soul and blues.

**10:30 pm: Maceo Parker:** Saxophonist and James Brown's most Famous Flame.

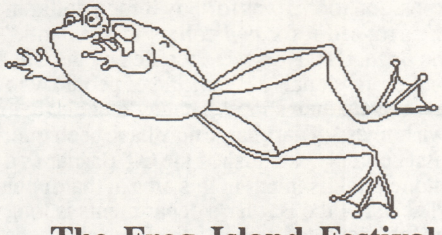
<u>Sunday, June 20</u>
**FEEL THE SPIRIT!**

**12:30 PM: Lequint Weaver and Hallelujah Connection:** An award-winning Detroit choir that must be seen as well as heard.

**2 pm: Ivo Perelman:** Torrid Pan-American music, featuring fellow Brazilian Guilherme France, with Reggie Workman, JoAnne Brackeen and Mark Helias. A Midwestern debut.

**4 pm: The Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band:** Reggae, calypso, ska and pure Caribbean sunshine from this popular band.

**6 pm: The Wild Magnolias:** Exotic costumes, chanting, singing and dancing from the Mardi Gras Indians. A Midwestern debut.



**The Frog Island Festival** is Depot Town's annual 'neighborhood picnic; while blankets, lawn chairs, picnic baskets and thermoses are welcome, no cans, bottles or kegs will be allowed. There will be a cash bar with beer, wine, soda and juices, as well as five food booths.

Tickets are on sale at Ticketmaster outlets at the Michigan Union Ticket Office, at Schoolkids' Records, P.J's Used Records, and the Little Professor Bookstore; and at Aubree's Saloon, River Arworks, Puffer Red's and the Huckleberry Party Store in Ypsilanti. For ticket information, phone 763-TKTS or 545-6666

## Neighborhood mourns the passing of Nels Gower

Nelson Gower died at the age of 62. He had cancer and had been in pain for several months. He was a strong man and had hid the pain and the truth from his family to protect them.

His wife Jan and he were proprietors of Cross Street Antiques for the past five years. He was always visible and always willing to lend a hand to anyone who needed it. He participated many times in functions here in Depot Town. He loved working with wood and refinishing antique trunks. Nels was a very artistic and creative person and he and Jan have been collectors and dealers in antiques for at least 20 yers.

In Nelson's younger days he served his country in the United States Navy and served as a deacon and sunday school teacher of his church.

He will be missed by all of us in Depot Town and especially by the family he loved so much.

## Famed Clydesdales to visit here June 15th

Depot Towners will have the opportunity to see if a team can still turn around in this block when the world famous Anheuser-Busch/Budweiser Clydesdale eight-horse hitch comes to the district on Tuesday, June 15. Scheduled to be excercised in this block of East Cross Street from noon until four p.m., the gigantic horses were found to be 'between engagements' and needed a place to be excersiced and groomed.

Farmers living in the 18th century along the banks of the River Clyde in Lanarkshire, Scotland, bred the Great Flemish White Horse, the forerunner of the Clydesdale. These first draft horses pulled loads of more than one ton at a walking speed of five miles per hour. Soon their reputation spread beyond the Scottish borders. Candians of Scottish descent brought the first Clydesdales to the US in the mid-1800s, where the draft horses resumed their existence on farms. Today, the Clydesdalesare used prjimarily for breeding and show.

The Budweiser Cydesdales were formally presented by August A. Busch, Jr., to his father to commemorate the repleal of prohibition. Today the brewery owns in excess of 200 horses.

## The Old Town Bazaar was a bellwether to our renaissance

# Was it our first 'Old Town?

[Editor's note: Almost everybody on the block marks the turn-around of the district to some highly personalized point of reference. The shop af 'fifty-nifty' has been described by many as 'years ahead of its time' or a 'paisley lighthouse of creativity.' In the days when Hayward's Men's Store had two shops in town, Mellencamp's still held forth on Michigan Avenue and you could still take your family to the picture show at the Martha, The Old Town Bazaar fit a unique place in time.]

"Antiques, gifts and old things," touted the weekly hand-drawn advertisements in *The Ypsilanti Press* from 1965 to 1968. 'Crown House of Gifts' was showing slick commercial crafts to the college crowd on Ann Arbor's State Street and 'Little Things' had opened an aerie there which mirrored their first shop in Detroit's Plum Street. All these were a reflection of Chicago's Old Town district which had recently proved that even the midwest could have its own version of the Haight-Ashbury district in San Fransisco. Psychedlic-underground-boutiques were making their first effort at gentrifying other decaying commercial districts like the one atYpsilanti's depot.

It was the Sixties and Depot Town was at the nadir of its existence. It was the pits. The God's Children motorcycle 'group' argued that they weren't a gang (they were a club!) and several storefront churches had moved into the block along with a karate studio, and some were hoping the pre-preservation period in Ypsilanti might turn the old railroad town into a trendy recerché enclave of locals who would cherish those dilapidated buildings and buy some contact paper daisies to stick on their Volkswagen beetles. There was, even then, a grandiose plan for turning the still-used depot into a fancy restaurant.

Barbara Freatman owned the former Masonic Temple, a big white three-story building that was situated half way between Turner's Restaurant and the Central Bar. The Alibi Bar was across the street and the passenger train still stopped twice a day. The closest neighbors were TV repair shops and a dry cleaner whose heat treatments permeated the walls and melted the scented candles in the 'natural illumination center,' one of many 'speciality booths' at the Old Town Bazaar.

Called the Old Town *Bizzare* by many, this unique gift shop was certainly a harbinger of new commercial enterprises to come. Ensconced in what is today the home of River Artworks and Richard Reid's Hair Station, the shop was owned by Terry and Maxe A. Obermeyer, Jr., who were assisted by Betty Kerr in antiques and Tom and Bettie Dodd in sales and decor. Other regular employees included Norma Bredernitz, Doris Patterson and Harriet Cornett. Maxe remembers the week day traffic being slim, but weekends were terribly busy. "We had invitational open houses, and many asked, 'Why are you doing this *down here*?" And they only came in the daylight hours. Today, folks still tell us of treasures they found at the Bazaar. It was a learning experience for all of us."

Originally in a partnership with Bob and Carolyn/June Dodge, the Obermeyers split the business after a few months and went off to the annual Chicago Gift Show to shop for Ypsi's little slice of commercial creativity. The concept at the loop's Palmer House upper floor exposition rooms was to "buy it for a dollar in Chicago; sell it for *two* dollars in Ypsilanti." The Bazaar's buyers were scolded by the Chicago professionals as "the kind of people who only buy for their shop what they'd put in their own homes." That charge may have been true, but it certainly established the OT Bazaar as a unique establishment in this area at that time!

The list of the Bazaar's departments is long and laborious and a visit to the large shop was often just as long. A rolled-on orange line painted on the floor led the shopper through a maze of life-size dead trees wedged between the floor and fourteen-foot ceilings and included jewelry (beads, earrings, giant cocktail rings and jeweled letter openers treasured by high school shoplifters from just up the hill on their lunch hour), paper products (party plates, cards, napkins, crepe paper flowers, cut-out daisies, and posters of Hollywood movie stars), scented candles and incense (who can remember Tabouli!? It was a scent that covered the aroma of marijuana, but much worse!), junk from Mexico (pierced tin lanterns, wood carvings, pots and plates, tempera paintings and hand-made pots), brass things (shiny stuff to hang on the wall to make the transition from a sun-burst clock to signs of the Zodiac), a smattering of antiques (grandma's rocker, a bureau filled with other saleable items, pedestal sinks with dried flowers overflowing, steamer trunks used to display other items, and the 'rent-an-ancestor department' made up of sepia-tone photographs of somebody's else's long-forgotten predecessors), and a basement gallery of original paintings and prints (featuring, in one month-long exposition, the first American showing of Amadeo Watanabe, the famed Japanese printmaker, but few believed they were the "*real thing* down in a neighborhood like this').

Even then, this was a place for creativity.


**Don't get your hair done just anywhere . . . get it done at**

Richard Reid's Hair Station

**50 E. Cross St.• 485-8228**
**In Historic Depot Town**

Angelia, Mary, Cristal, Joyce, Richard, Lynn


## Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market

**June:**

**5 Perennial Exchange Day.**
Trade your plants, 10-12

**12 Strawberrries 'n' Crafts**
Last craft show until fall

**19 Frog Island Jazz**
Shop in the a.m.

**26 Youth Sales Day!**
Call to reserve space for youth aged 5-17

*Check with vendors for early produce harvest.*

**Market Hours:**
Wednesday and Saturday 7am - 3pm
**Open year 'round**
in the railroad freighthouse
**Ample Free Parking**
Live music every Saturday am
*For information: 483-1480*


Good Day,

Recent events in the health care industry have people concerned; do we want health care reform? What will the cost be? Will providers of service give their best work, or will they say, "We get paid anyway, so let's just put in our time"?

**There are many other questions, but none as important as, "Are you taking care of your spine and nervous system?"**

Every year it happens over and over — someone suffered needlessly with headaches, stomach, intestinal, sinus, allergy, hip, etc. conditions and Chiropractic helped. We helped.

• Some poor soul is hurt in a car accident. It takes him two years to come into the office - and is he ever a mess. The cause is found, and the cause is adjusted. The patient who suffered for two years gets well. Why? His case: his cause was a pinched nerve correctable by a Chiropractic Adjustment.

• A poor soul is constipated for four days. Medicine does not help. Chiropractic helps and within twenty minutes the patient has a bowel movement.

**Does Chiropractic work?**

Yes it does, no doubt about it. What it takes is a patient who wants to get well and works with the Chiropractic doctor.

• A young girl has scoliosis; Chiropractic analysis is done and the scoliosis is correctable, scoliosis is corrected, patient is happy, parents are happy, and the doctor is happy. Yet, children still suffer with problems that Chiropractic could help.

Why do people suffer to wait, and wait to suffer? I wish I knew.

**Let Chiropractic help you!**

Call me today for an appointment.
(313) 495-2120

Sincerely, -Dr. A.C. O'Dell

## Drinking fountain given in memory of Viola Lemmon

Mothers' Day saw the installation of a drinking fountain at the Freighthouse donated by the family of Viola Lemmon. In her 35 years in Ypsilanti, she was a regular shopper at the Farmers' Market. She passed away February 2 at the age of 86.

# Scouts to the rescue!

## Creative new plan for saving district's historic depot

The Depot Town Downtown Development Authority (DDA) heard a proposal last month to renovate and restore the historic Michigan Central Railroad depot at Ypsilanti. The proposal was made by a group of Boy Scouts who have successfully carried on just such a project on a lighthouse in the Straits of Mackinac. The concept is for their national organization to purchase the property and for the Scouts to learn new skills as they undertake the renovation. When completed, the property would be given to a nonprofit group to operate.

DDA was favorably impressed with their video tape of the lighthouse project and referred them to the depot's current owners.

*The Ann Arbor News* reported that the owners have put their project on hold in recent years, awaiting the effect of area plant closings. Recent years have seen the replication of a tower on the building, tuck-pointing of the brick, repairs to the exterior of the foundation, a new roof on the main building, and exterior paint.

The Depot Town Association has asked DDA to do everything they can to facilitate such a proposal for improvement to the district's landmark namesake. The trains may stop here any more, but the people sure do!

# 'Reborn Again' feature in *The News* lauds recent improvements

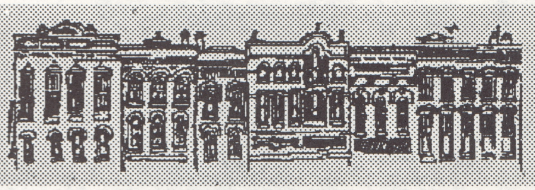
Another front page color feature in a Sunday issue of *The Ann Arbor News* touts the homespun successes of this block and many were surprised to see the largest of three photos highlighting a Farmall tractor tooling down East Cross Street in front of the Old Town Café.

Many locals attest to not seeing a tractor on the block since last year's Engine Club exhibit at Heritage Festival, but it certainly adds to the district 'quaint country quality' for those Ann Arborites who seek diversions into antiquity and charm.

Antique dealer Jim MacDonald lamented the passing of the former Old Town Restaurant and added his usual creative and optimist enthusiasm to the article.

Citing the recent development of Bill and Sandee French's Old Town Café, the article also featured Linda French's further development of the former Depot Exchange property into a comedy club. Gwen and Dave Blackmer still weren't ready to divulge their new enterprise in Bell, Book & Candle's old spot, but *The News* did enthusiastically report their "maintaining tight secrecy over a new retail business they plan to lauch" next door to their Miller's Ice Cream Parlor.

# Dateline: Depot Town:



### A thank you note from Carolyn McKeever:

# RiverFest '93 drew upon many talents

The thirty canoe teams traveling from the Huron's headwaters in Oakland County to its mouth at Lake Erie were as impressed with Ypsilanti hospitality as they were with the much-improved water quality along their route. May 19 saw the flotilla spend the evening in Ypsi's Riverside Park and that area which has hosted centuries of travellers did it all over again.

Native Americans regularly crossed the Huron at 'cross' street and marshalled there after coming out of the northern forests to traverse the prairie east and west across the lower peninsula. Godfrey's Trading Post was the first white man's venture in the area, predating the settlement of Woodruff's Grove downstream a mile. Early mill owners then built their stately mansions and gardened out back. In later years, Quirk Park became a gathering place all over again. Festivals and concerts find today's Riverside Park still to be a perfect place for gatherings alongside the river.

"It was a perfect, but cool evening," said Carolyn McKeever, who is chair of the Huron River Watershed Council and one of the prime movers in the week-long celebration of the life of the Huron River.

Ford Motor Company was RiverFest's greatest benefactor with the help of Wendy Davy, a public relations executive from Campbell and Company. The Ypsilanti Rotary Club and the Ann Arbor Bank of Commerce also helped to underwrite expenses for the event.

McKeever extends special thanks to Delux Rental, Ypsilanti's Farmers' Market, and Bruce Ross from the City's Parks & Recreation Department. Mayor Michael Homel added his official signature to the 'compact,' an illuminated manuscript carried the length of the journey by canoe and signed by governmental officials along the way.

Acoustic music and vocals were presented by Nelson and Price and Bob Kerr showed his authentic frontiersman regalia. Community High's McKell Brockbank read an official welcome in French *Quebequois*, playing the role of Rene Pierre Sieur de la Salle, the explorer who traversed the Huron in 1680 as far as Belleville.

Ypsilanti's restaurants provided the evening's meal for the canoeists. Cheryl Farmer orgnized the dinner and sends thanks to Santa Fe Chili Company, Haab's Restaurant, Karonia's Palace, Max's Deli, Louis' Café, Ypsilanti Kiwanis Club and the Daily Grind for their additions to the menu. Some canoeists camped up the hill in Cheryl's back yard while others were billeted at EMU's Hoyt Conference Center.

Scout Troop 240 brought the warmth of a council fire to the event and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources demonstrated their fish census techniques which introduced the attendees to the constantly improving clear water fish in our portion of the Huron.

Carolyn extends appreciation to Ypsilanti's DPW crew who always chip in for such public gatherings so efficiently.

Many in attendance, both canoeists and observers, attested to the fact the our portion of Michigan looks much different from the river's point of view and Paul Rentschler, director of the Huron River Watershed Council noted that urban development seems to encroach very little from his view at water level.

## It seems like almost everybody wants to live in Depot Town!

Anyone with available apartments: Bettie Dodd has names and numbers of several people who have called to seek newly available rentals in the district. She says, "Landlords: Keep me posted so I can refer prospective tenants to you."

Use the numbers at right to make your connections either way . . . .

**Depot Town ClearingHouse**

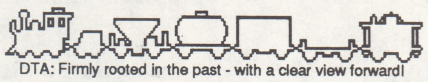
**Commercial & Residential Properties available**

*in Ypsilanti's historic railroad district*

**Call: 482-6371 or 485-8228**

for the current listing

# Depot Town Association, Inc., 20 May 1993


DTA: Firmly rooted in the past - with a clear view forward!

Vice president Judi Monaghan chaired the meeting and editor Tom Dodd kept the minutes.

**City Parks and Recreation Director Amy McMillan reported:**

- Asked for reactions to closing of Riverside Park's north gate and parking area. All concurred that the park was more orderly without the day-long beer parties in parked vehicles. The park still gets plenty of use from those who walk in.
- Coming City budget cuts will mean loosing her clerical person and it will be harder to turn-around permits, etc. Please be patient.
- Arrangements are still being made for the Clydesdales' exhibition here on Tuesday, 15 June from noon to 4 p.m.: special events application, insurance coverage, clean-up afterward, where to close the streets?
- The next Hallowe'en Hoopla needs total program sponsorship for supplies. Parks & Rec. staff will still help, but financing is back to the neighborhood.
- Thanks to all for the excellent cooperation in welcoming the canoeists in Riverside Park on 19 May for the Huron RiverFest.

**Minutes of April 15** were approved as published.

**Treasury report:** $6,766.00 in the general fund.

**Flower planting bee** is 9 a.m. Saturday, 22 May. Market vendors and Margolis Nursery are bringing materials paid for through DDA funds. Activity will center on street planters and the beds by the Signal Tower. Individual buildings' tubs may be filled at owner discretion.

**Old Business:**

**EMU Parents' Club proposal**: no action reported.

**Business Watch proposal** and plan: no action reported.

**Frog Island Festival up-date** on schedule, events, program, etc., made by Carolyn McKeever. Ad sponsorships for the program book are coming in before the event this year. Other commercial neighborhoods are joining the promotion this year with posters and table-toppers in their establishments. Still more activity is welcome. Need to review contract for its completion between DTA and The Ark.

**Heritage Fest's sculpture contest**, Works in Progress, has received three applications and more are expected.

**New Business:**

It was decided to create a DTA **policy to limit funeral flower expenses** to $25 (plus deliver or relay charges) for business persons, Association members or their immediate families.

**The monthly Clearing House** gets calls from potential renters nearly every day; and owners need to keep the list up to date for best results of this neighborhood service. See item in this issue and call Bettie Dodd with your availability reports when you are going to have a unit available.

**Fan/bunting** in red, white and blue is being made available by Sandy Hoag (Remington/Walker); in 6' X 3' lengths for $27 each. The traditional Victorian patriotic decoration is suggested to complement store fronts for the coming holidays and parades through the district. She will canvas the block by 22 May and Jerry Hoag will put up all that are ordered by that time.

**Rag Report:** New ads are coming in and the "Everyday Life" series continues.

**Depot Town Downtown Development Authority:** Carolyn McKeever reported that a Scout group has made a proposal to renovate the MCRR depot. Their group of Eagles has successfully restored a historic lighthouse near Mackinac and seek another exciting project. See item in this issue.

## Strictly local stuff:

## June 1993

Depot Towners are invited to participate in any or all of the following activities for the good of this old commercial district:

**Depot Town Association**
7:30 p.m. Thursday, 17th
J&R Trading Post

**Depot Town**
**Antique Engine Club**
7:30 pm Thursday, 24th
at the Freighthouse

### THE DEPOT TOWN RAG

A publication of the Depot Town Association, Inc. a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to preserving the unique character of the neighborhood and to the enhancement of its business climate.

-Tom Dodd, editor

**The Depot Town Association, Inc.**
**David Blackmer, president**
c/o The Old Caboose
400 Market Place
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48198

Ypsilanti Heritage Festival
**Trains, Planes & Automobiles**
August 20, 21, 22, 1993

**COMPANION CARE**
"Home Care With Compassion"
*Competitive Prices*
**HOME SUPPORT AND CARE MANAGEMENT**
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**Vickie Glassman**
Client Services Coordinator
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Ypsilanti, MI 48197

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- **Designer Fabrics**
- **Floral Designs - silks and dried**

*We will be featuring a special evening in August to unveil our '1993 Magical Christmas Fantasy.'*

*Please come in and sign our guest list for an invitation.*

*Congratulations and Best Wishes to all our area Graduates from*
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35 E. Cross St. • Ypsilanti, Michigan
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**313-485-0530**
651 Rice Street
**Friday:** noon - dusk, **Saturday:** 9am - 3pm
VOLUNTEER AND LEARN

# Everyday Life in Depot Town in the nineteenth century

## Drinking, smoking and more spitting in the railroad saloons

*"Is my father in there?"*
*"Get away from them swingin' doors, boy."*
*"But I want my Daddy!"*
*"What's your Daddy's name, boy?"*
*"My Daddy's name is John Brown."*
*"John Brown? Why, that's my name!"*
*"Father!"*
*"Son!"*

Railroad districts were known to be the repository of hard drinkers who frequented tawdry saloons and fought and gambled and wrecked their homes and health. Habitués of those parlors often viewed them differently: as a home away from home, a place to relax, jovial camaraderie and willing ears to listen to their stories. Early saloons in Ypsilanti - and later on in Ann Arbor - were the precursors of the banks and real estate companies. Most of the great land deals of the Michigan Territory were consumated in saloons - the earliest of which usually had a sampling of home-brewed whiskey and beer. As the frontier grew, so did the distillery business, and Ypsilanti at one time enjoyed the product of six different breweries. Saloons, taverns and grog shops were widely attended, especially by men, for drinking, gambling, socializing, etc. Early in the century Rochester, New York, had a population of only eight thousand yet it boasted having an astonishing one hundred drinking estalishments. Ironwood, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, held the record for the highest ratio of people to saloons during the hey-day of lumbering in that region. Depot Town - and every other community in Michigan is now strictly regulated by state liquor controls of licensing such establishments.

Drinking was widely indulged in at home when entertaining, at frolics, at huskings, taverns, dances and weddings. Hard cider was the favorite drink of the North for the first half of the century, while corn liquor and other forms of alcohol reigned in the South. Although both sexes indulged, drunkenness was considered shameful for a woman but not for a man. Consequently, the taverns and saloons were always dominated by men. Temperance movements managed to reduce consumption of alcohol somewhat at various periods throughout the century. Depot Town's neighbors in Holly, Michigan, helped to revive their charming Battle Alley by celebrating Carrie Nation Days as an annual event to commemorate her temperance tirade in that district.

The better establishments across the nation in the 1800s boasted of serving as many as 150 different mixed drinks. To help attract customers, they often served free lunches and snacks, provided drinks were purchased. Creative barkeepers had their own version of the Harvey Wallbanger, the Fuzzy Navel and the Singapore Sling. Here's the choice of drinks at a fashionable bar-room, from an advertisement in the 1840s - a full thirty years before today's Depot Town forerunners had emerged:

| | |
|---|---|
| Plain mint julep | Fancy do |
| Mixed do | Peach do |
| Pineapple do | Claret do |
| Capped do | Strawberry do |
| Arrack do | Racehorse do |
| Sherry cobbler | Rochelle do |
| Tip and Ty | Fiscal agent |
| Veto | I.O.U. |
| Tippe na Pecco | Moral suasion |
| Vox populi | Ne plus ultra |
| Shambro | Virginia fancy |
| Knickerbocker | Smasher |
| Floater | Pig and whistle |
| Citronella Jam | Egg Nog |
| Poor man's punch | Iced do |
| Milk punch | Cherry do |
| Peach do | Jewett's fancy |
| Deacon | Exchange |
| Stone Wall | Sifter |
| Soda punch | Slingflip |
| Cocktail | Apple-jack |
| Chain-lightning | Phlegm-cutter |
| Tog | |

### A saloon's drink posting

- seldom on a menu and *never* printed on cocktail napkins - was most often memorized by the loyal clientelle. A serious drinker seldom swayed from his 'usual,' and a good barkeep knew his customers and their preferences. A black-painted board sometimes served as a chalkboard for the posting of 'special' concoctions, sometimes trying to popularize a peculiar combination of ingredients heard about in other regions and seeking popularity in this area. Snob appeal has always helped to sell new alcoholic recipes and, if they were drinking it in Detroit, it was bound to be a good seller down the line. Some of the following drinks were known in Depot Town even *before* the railroad was completed:

**Ale Cocktail:** A mixed drink comprised of ale, ginger and pepper, from at least 1838 on.

**Apple brandy:** A liquor distilled from apple cider, enjoyed throughout the century. Also known as apple jack.

**Baldface:** Slang for old brown whiskey.

**Bimbo:** An alcoholic drink comprised of brandy and sugar flavored with lemon.

**Blackstrap:** Slang for any cheap alcohol, named after the thick molasses used in the processing of industrial alcohol.

**Brandy Sour:** A drink comprised of brandy, lime or lemon juice, bitters and carbonated water, from at least the 1860s.

**Brandy toddy:** Brandy mixed with hot water and sugar.

**Champagne:** Used throughout the century.

**Cobble:** A drink consisting of wine, sugar, fruit juices and crushed ice, from around midcentury.

**Cocktail:** Any mixed alcoholic drink, from at least 1806.

**Corn juice:** Another name for corn liquor.

**Egg-nog** and **Ginger Beer**

**Flip:** A drink comprised of beer, rum and sugar.

**Gin-sling:** A drink comprised of gin, lemon and other ingredients.

**Grog:** Rum and water, or gin and water.

**Martini:** A drink comprised of gin and vermouth, invented between 1860-1862 and briefly known as a Martinez.

**Monongahela:** Whiskey distilled on the river of that name. Any American-made whiskey.

**Syllabub:** A drink similar to eggnog, but made with white wine, brandy, sugar, and whipped cream, traditionally served at Christmas early in the century, especially in Charleston.

## Other vices deserve to be listed here, too. . .

Along with all that drinking and spitting down at the depot there was a lot of smoking, too. And more spitting. Virtually all of those who partook of these filthy habits in the 1800s are dead today! Here are some of the products that added to the aromatic pleasures of the day:

**Cigar:** Introduced in the 1790s from the Caribbean. Cigar smoking was taken up widely by rich men from early in the century.

**Cigarette, cigarita, cigarrito:** Cigarette smoking was known as early as the 1830s, but it didn't catch on until the second half of the century. The earliest commercial cigarettes were manufactured in London and New York after the Crimean War. Brand names included Opera Puffs, Bon Ton, Fragrant Vanity Fair, Turkish Orientals, Three Kings, Old Rip, Old Judge and Canvas Back. Production of cigarettes increased dramatically with the invention of the automoatic cigarette-making machine, with one billion cigarettes manufactured in 1885. These machine-made cigarettes were called by various names, including Cameo, Cross Cut, Duke's Best, Pedro, Cyclone and Velvet Mouthpiece, all sold with the label, "The cigarettes are manufactured on the Bonsack Cigarette machine." As popular as cigarettes became, chewing and pipe tobacco were even more popular throughout the century.

**Kinnikinnic:** A mixture of tobacco and sumac leaves or other ingredients, smoked in a pipe by the Indians. A town by that name still exists in southeastern Ohio, but none of the sumac of that variety exists there today. They must have smoked it all up. Even Kinnikinnic's hempish cousins have all but disappeared from this block since the 1960s.

**Long nine:** Nickname for a cheap, nine-inch cigar.

**Snuff:** Powdered tobacco, inhaled through the nostrils. Many rural and lower-class urban women dipped shuff up until the 1820s. Thereafter the practice was largely confined to poor Southern or Western women.

**Next month:** Slang expressions of the 1800s. 

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# A Depot Town SAMPLER

## What makes us 'Depot Towners?'

It takes all kinds, they say, to make a world; and it seems to take just as many kinds to make one a true denezen of this neighborhood. Often seen as a microcosm of the rest of our culture, Depot Town's credentials for membership might also tell something of our involvement in the whole scheme of things beyond the crux of Cross and River Streets.

In newspaper parlance, we wonder who our 'public readership' is. That's the group we tend to refer to as 'Depot Towners.' They're the folks who claim this as their stomping grounds, but, as last year's merchant survey clearly showed, they're of several different stripes.

Some say they fit the category because they've lived up the block for three or more generations. Others figure they qualify because they've lived here the last year. Business folks and building owners certainly ought to qualify, but are there levels of involvement for those qualifications? Does being a part of the Downtown Development Authority count? What about membership in the Depot Town Association? When it comes to paid sponsorships of *The Rag*, the editor is probably swayed by that allegiance. The paper's monthly sponsors certainly should be included in the local lore of each issue.

One family arrives at a local saloon every afternoon after their business closes and enjoys a beer together before returning to their homes. Their camaraderie seems to have little to do with the social/political dynamics of the neighborhood — and everything to do with the quality of their interaction as a family-owned business — although 'business talk' almost never surfaces at the tavern. It seems to just be a place to 'come down' from the day's exigencies. The atmosphere has surrounded them for more than thirty years and this is 'just the way we undwind' after an active day in the world of business.

Others seem surprised at the opening of a new enterprise on the block, even though they call themselves 'regulars.' The business in question may have been shut down for nearly two years, but they didn't notice. When it reopens, their memory of its earlier incarnation may be dim, but they can call themselves 'regulars.'

We all have different concepts of the passage of time and, in an ancient commercial district such as this, we have different check points to mark the way.

Whether we've been here since grandpa worked in the signal tower or have rented this apartment since we were freshmen last year, we can still 'act like we own the place.' That's one of the nicest things about small town America. You can buy-in over either the long haul or the short one. It's open to all.

And in the long run we remain true to the old adage: The older we get, the better we were.

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